

HOGARTH



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T. LEMAN HARE

HOGARTH

(1697—1764)

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Others in Preparation.

PLATE I.—THE SHRIMP GIRL. Frontispiece
(In the National Gallery, London)

This brilliant, impressionist sketch, done long before the era of impressionism, is something of a marvel. "The Shrimp Girl" cries out from Hogarth's works, a *tour de force*, done without premeditation, in some happy hour when the unerring hand unerringly followed the quick eye.

THE JOURNAL OF THE

ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
VOLUME LXXV. PART I. 1905.
LONDON: PUBLISHED BY THE INSTITUTE, 21, BEDFORD SQUARE, W.C. 1.
PRINTED BY THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE.

Price 10s. 6d. net.



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HOGARTH

BY C. LEWIS HIND ❁ ❁ ❁
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HOOGARTH

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THE DAY

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I

AN AUCTION AND A CONVERSATION

THE auction was proceeding leisurely and without excitement. It was an "off day." I was present because these pictures of the Early British School included a "Conversation Piece" ascribed to Hogarth, and a medley of prints after him, worn impressions, the vigour gone, merely the skeletons of his bustling de-

signs remaining. They fetched trivial prices: they were not the real thing. And there was little demand for the portraits by half-forgotten limners of the period, portraits of dull gentlemen in eighteenth-century costume, examples of wooden Thomas Hudson, famous as the master of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and of such mediocrities as Knapton and Shackleton. Yet they evoked a sort of personal historical interest, recreating, as portrait after portrait passed before our eyes, the level highway of art of those days before Hogarth delivered it from the foreign thraldom.

Tranquilly I contemplated the procession of lifeless portraits, noting with amusement the contrast between the grimy but very real hands of the attendant who supported the canvases upon the easel, and the painted hands in the pictures. The attendant's body was hidden by the canvas, but his hands appeared on either side of the frame clutching it. I indicated the contrast to my companion, a connoisseur, but he saw no humour in the comparison. He was almost sulky. A decorative Francis Cotes, and a luminous Richard Wilson, that he hoped to acquire for a few pounds, had gone into the fifties. He indignantly refused to make a bid

PLATE II.—HOGARTH'S SISTER

(In the National Gallery, London)

This dashing and brilliant portrait probably represents Ann Hogarth, the artist's younger sister, who died, unmarried, in 1771. Note the vivacious and original way in which Hogarth has handled this sympathetic subject, and the skill with which he has, as it were, "substituted light and colour for paint."



for the "Conversation Piece" ascribed to Hogarth. "What a period! what an outlook!" he cried. "William Kent the arbiter of taste, portraits with the clothes done by drapery men. Conversation Pieces with stupid gentlemen and stupid ladies doing nothing stupidly, and Hogarth flooding the town with his dreadful moralities. Pah!" He shook himself, emitted an exclamation of disgust that made the auctioneer glance quickly in his direction, and then said brusquely, "What do you think of Matisse?"

I was not going to be drawn into that. I knew that Matisse was *le dernier cri*, the newest "master," the idol of the moment among the "advanced," who had passed beyond the re-discovery of Cézanne and Van Gogh. Hogarth, the painter Hogarth, not the "pictur'd moralities" Hogarth, had also had his period of re-discovery. Perhaps it began that day in the eighties when Whistler was admiring, "almost smelling," the Canalettos in the National Gallery, while his companion, Mr. Pennington, was seeing for the first time Hogarth's "Marriage à la Mode" series, "fairly gasping for breath," to quote his own words.

"Come over here, quickly," cried Pennington. "What's the matter?" said Whistler, turning round. "Why! Hogarth! He was a great

painter!" "Sh—sh," said Whistler (pretending he was afraid that some one would overhear), "Sh—sh. Yes! *I know it . . . But don't you tell 'em.*"

Whistler had known that Hogarth was a great painter for years. His appreciation of the pugnacious little man of genius, with "a sort of knowing jockey look," to quote Leigh Hunt, dated from his boyhood. "From then until his death," says Mr. Pennell, "Whistler always believed Hogarth to be the greatest English artist who ever lived, and he seldom lost an opportunity of saying so."

Well, it is a long time since the eighties, and to-day the fame of Hogarth as a painter is as great as was his fame as a moralist and satirist in the eighteenth century. Indeed I observe that some writers are beginning to resent praise of Hogarth as a painter, considering that the incident is closed, that all are agreed. That is not so. My friend, the connoisseur, who sat by my side at the auction sale, dissents. When he asked me fiercely what I thought of Matisse, I countered with the question—"What do you think of Hogarth?"

His answer was short and to the point. "There are only two of his things that interest

me. They're great. I mean, of course, 'The Shrimp Girl,' and 'The Stay Maker.' No! I don't care about his moralities, and satires, and progresses. Single figures and incidental passages are charming, as good as the best episodes in Frith, but as a whole they're dowdy, and every one of them shouts. I object to shouts and screams in art. Exaggeratedly exact and humorous records of eighteenth-century life and topography they may be, but I don't want to be reminded of the eighteenth century. Give me the present or the real past, not the past of yesterday. It's too near, too like us in our Bank Holiday moods, to be pleasant. Whistler called him the greatest English artist, did he? Merely another example of Whistler's extravagance. Hogarth has his place. Let us keep cool and keep him there."

"But consider his portraits," said I, "and the charm and skill of his oil paintings. Consider them apart altogether from the engravings, which do not do the pictures any sort of justice. 'The Stay Maker,' I remember, was hung at the Old Masters in 1908 with twenty-eight other Hogarths. What a display that was. Consider 'Garrick and his Wife,' 'Mary Hogarth,' 'Miss Lavinia Fenton,' 'The

Servants,' the superb 'Marriage à la Mode,' 'Captain Coram,' 'Peg Woffington,' 'The Fishing Party,' 'Pall Mall,' 'George II. and his Family,' at Dublin, the water piece from the 'Idle Apprentice' series. And above all consider the time when he lived—you *must* consider that. He was born in 1697. Like Giotto and Watteau, he was a pioneer."

"I don't take the slightest account of an artist's period," said my companion, as we moved away from the auction room. "The date of his birth doesn't interest me in the least. I ask myself only, Was he a great artist? Call Hogarth the Father of English Painting if you like, say that he set the ball rolling, that he gave life to dry bones, then recall his achievement, and where does he stand? What are his six best works against Gainsborough's best six? What is his 'Captain Coram' to Reynolds's 'Lord Heathfield,' and much as I admire his 'Stay Maker,' what is it to Watteau's 'Gersaint's Sign'? Compliment Hogarth as much as you like, say that he was half-a-dozen men in one—satirist, publicist, draughtsman, engraver, moralist, caricaturist, painter—but keep him in his place. I admit that he had an extraordinary gift for

putting on the colour clean, swift, and straight, but don't magnify his gifts. Hogarth was a fighting preacher, an eighteenth-century Dr. Clifford with a natural aptitude for drawing and painting. He was half publicist, half artist. Now Matisse was artist all through. Maurice Denis understands him perfectly, and that article of Denis's in 'L'Occident' was— But you haven't told me what you think of Matisse?"

II

HOGARTH AS DELIVERER

I refused absolutely to consider Matisse. Let all thought of Matisse be banished. The subject of this little book is Hogarth, and in studying him or any other artist, I entirely disagree with my friend, the connoisseur, that one must disregard his period, ignore his birth-date, and consider only his achievement. Hogarth was born in 1697, and being an original he turned his back upon convention and faced realities. But although he reproached, with consistent forcefulness, the life of his day, now and again he suffered himself to be influenced by convention. Did not he write: "I entertained some

hopes of succeeding in what the puffers in books call the *first style of history painting*: so that without having a stroke of this *grand* business before, I quitted small portraits and familiar conversations, and with a smile at my own temerity commenced history painting, and on a great staircase at St. Bartholomew's Hospital painted the Scripture stories, 'The Pool of Bethesda' and 'The Good Samaritan,' with figures seven feet high." These are his failures, because he was looking not at life, but at picture-land. A failure, too, was the altar-piece for St. Mary Redcliffe at Bristol, painted as late as 1756, when he was fifty-nine. For this huge altar-piece, in three compartments, he received five hundred and twenty-five pounds. Removed in 1858 to the Bristol Fine Arts Academy, this immense triptych was last year sent to London for sale, which seems unkind, if not cruel, to the memory of Hogarth. He painted these "grand manner" canvases because, as he says, "I was unwilling to sink into a *portrait manufacturer*." Had Hogarth succeeded in "the first style of history painting," had he continued in that facile convention, he would never have been hailed as the Father of English Painting, and Sir Walter Armstrong

would assuredly never have written in his survey of "Art in Great Britain and Ireland" these words: "At the end of the seventeenth century fortune sent a deliverer."

A deliverer from what? From the thralldom of foreign artists, and artists of foreign extraction, and from the monotonous level of mediocrity into which British art had sunk after the "Kneller tyranny." Perhaps two parallel lists of portrait painters will be the best exemplification, one beginning with Holbein, who was born just two hundred years before Hogarth, the other with Hogarth—the deliverer. Many minor names are, of course, omitted.

BEFORE HOGARTH

Holbein . . 1497-1543
 Bettes . . ? 1530-1573
 Jonson . . 1593-1664
 Van Dyck 1599-1641
 Dobson . . ? 1600-1658
 Walker . . 1610-1646
 Lely . . 1618-1680
 Mary Beale 1632-1697
 Kneller . . 1646-1723
 Richardson 1665-1745
 Thornhill . 1675-1734
 Vanloo . . 1684-1745

ENTER HOGARTH

Hogarth . . 1697-1764
 Hudson . . 1701-1779
 Ramsay . . 1713-1784
 Reynolds . 1723-1792
 Cotes . . . 1725-1770
 Gainsborough 1727-1788
 Romney . . 1734-1802
 Raeburn . . 1756-1823
 Hoppner . . ? 1758-1810
 Opie . . . 1761-1801
 Lawrence . 1769-1830

In pre-Hogarthian days first Holbein and later Van Dyck dominated British art, Van

Dyck's being by far the stronger influence. Indeed it has lasted until to-day. Dobson, a sterling painter, was a pupil of Van Dyck's. Lely was born at Soest near Utrecht, Kneller at Lübeck, and Vanloo at Aix. The residuum of native-born painters is not very important, and although one might add a score of names to those included in the pre-Hogarthian list, it is obvious that before the day of the "sturdy little satirist," with his hatred of all things foreign, including the "black old masters," and his love of all things English, except William Kent and his circle, and such folk as happened to annoy him, art in England had no independent growth. It certainly was not racial, and it was not characteristic in any way of the English temperament or the English vision. After Hogarth, excluding his minor contemporaries, Hudson, Ramsay, and Cotes, the art of Great Britain was illumined by the light of genius, native born, which began with Reynolds and Gainsborough, and spread out in varying and decreasing splendour down to the prettinesses of Lawrence.

Had Hogarth any influence? In one way he had. He was the founder of the anecdotic school. But, in the eighteenth century, he was

PLATE III.—MISS FENTON

(In the National Gallery, London)

Here we have the famous actress, Miss Lavinia Fenton, as "Polly Peachum" in the "Beggar's Opera." Born in 1708, she married, as his second wife, Charles Paulet, third Duke of Bolton: she died in 1760. The "Beggar's Opera" was produced at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1728.



regarded as a satirist, as a maker of "moral pieces," and, with a few exceptions, he won small esteem as a painter. Sir Joshua hardly mentions him, although they both lived for years in Leicester Fields, and Sir Joshua must have known his portraits well, and must often have seen the little man, twenty-six years his senior, walking within the enclosure "in a scarlet *roquelaure* or 'rockelo,' with his hat cocked and stuck on one side, much in the manner of the Great Frederick of Prussia."

Whatever private admiration Sir Joshua may have had for Hogarth as a painter, there are few signs of it in his public utterances. Was it because "our late excellent Hogarth imprudently, or rather presumptuously, attempted the great historical style"? But Hogarth had some praise from the President in the Fourteenth Discourse, delivered on December 10, 1788, twenty-four years after Hogarth's death. He is accredited with "extraordinary talents," with "successful attention to the ridicule of life," with the "invention of a new species of dramatic painting." Lamb, dear Lamb, took up the cudgels for Hogarth even as a historical painter, arguing that "they have expression of *some sort or other* in them. 'The Child

Moses before Pharaoh's Daughter,' for instance, which is more than can be said of Sir Joshua Reynolds's 'Repose in Egypt.'" Well, it does not matter either way. Neither Hogarth nor Sir Joshua live by their "excursions into the Holy Land."

The point I wish to labour is that the admiration of Hogarth's contemporaries was almost entirely for his "pictur'd morals," not for his paintings. It was his engravings that made him known; few saw the paintings, and it was only when the paintings began to be studied long after his death, that his greatness was revealed. Selections of his works were brought together in 1814, 1817, and 1862. By the latter date connoisseurs acknowledged that Hogarth "was really a splendid painter."

Who can be surprised that the "pictur'd moral" engravings were popular—"The Harlot's Progress," "The Rake's Progress," "Marriage à la Mode"? They were a new thing in British art. Here was the life of the day reproduced, accented stridently and humorously. The people were interested, bought the engravings, found their satire amusing, and remained unregenerate. The pirates copied them, Hogarth fought the pirates, and he found that the

success of "these pictures on canvas similar to representations on the stage," enabled him to meet the expenses of his family, which portraits and "Conversation Pieces" had failed to do. It was the engravings that were popular, that sold. The pictures themselves brought him little fame and little money. It was six years before the "Marriage à la Mode" series found a purchaser. In 1751, Mr. Lane of Hillingdon bought the set for one hundred and twenty pounds at the queer sale devised by Hogarth, one of the stipulations being that no dealers in pictures were to be admitted as bidders. There was no crush. Only three people were present at the sale—Hogarth, Dr. James Parsons, and Mr Lane, the buyer.

Connoisseurship in painting was at a low ebb in the first half of the eighteenth century. The old masters, the "old dark masters," whom Hogarth attacked so vigorously, were supposed to have said the last word in painting. There was no national collection, and no display of pictures until Hogarth originated the exhibition at the Foundling Hospital in 1740 with the presentation to the institution of his "Captain Coram." Between 1717 and 1735, when "The Rake's Progress" appeared, Hogarth had issued

a vast number of prints, and he continued to do so until the end of his life, closing the amazing series with "The Bathos," done with cynical humour just before his death.

Walpole asserted that "as a painter Hogarth had but slender merit," Churchill called him a "dauber," and Wilkes spoke of his portraits as "almost beneath all criticism," but these gentlemen were prejudiced. Lamb made the neat remark that we "read" his prints, and "look" at other pictures; Northcote said, "Hogarth has never been admitted to rank high as a painter;" but Walter Savage Landor atoned for these depreciations by proclaiming that "in his portraits he is as true as Gainsborough, as historical as Titian," which is neither true nor good sense.

To-day, of course, everybody, with a few exceptions, extols Hogarth as a painter, and students of the manners of the eighteenth century continue to peer at his engravings.

Hogarth, of course, thought well of himself.

"That fellow Freke," he said once, "is always shooting his bolt absurdly one way or another."

"Ay," remarked his companion, "but at the same time Mr. Freke declared you were as good a portrait-painter as Van Dyck."

"There he was in the right," quoth Hogarth.

And Mrs. Hogarth thought well too of the painter quality in her "sturdy, outspoken, honest, obstinate, pugnacious little man," who—one is glad to believe—once pummelled a fellow soundly for maltreating the beautiful drummeress who figures in "Southwark Fair." In one of his "Eighteenth Century Vignettes," Mr. Austin Dobson tells us that Mrs. Hogarth, who survived her husband twenty-five years, thought that his pictures had beautiful colour, and that he was more than a painter of morals.

Mrs. Hogarth had insight, or perhaps she remembered what the little man of genius must often have told her. He knew what he was worth, he knew the illuminating power of his light, and it was not his way to hide it under a bushel.

III

TWO BOOKS ABOUT HOGARTH

Tardily, perhaps, I mention Mr. Austin Dobson's name. In writing of Hogarth and the

vigorous part he played in the art life of the "worst-mannered" century, as it has been called, Mr. Dobson is as indispensable as a Blue Book to a politician. But unlike Blue Books, his writings are delightful. He is the eighteenth century, and his volume on William Hogarth is definitive. Originally published, I believe, in 1879, it has passed through several editions, being continuously improved and enlarged. One of its avatars was the stately and sumptuous art monograph of 1902, with some prefatory pages by Sir Walter Armstrong on the painter's technique. The volume has now reached a new, enlarged, and small edition, a combination of Hogarthian lore, apt gossip, and reference book.

The text—well, the text is by Mr. Dobson; just to say that suffices. And at the end are thirty-five pages of a Bibliography of Books, &c., relating to Hogarth; thirty pages of a Catalogue of Paintings by or attributed to Hogarth; and sixty-three pages of a Catalogue of the Principal Prints by or after Hogarth. As a postscript to the Catalogue of Prints is this note: "It has also been thought unnecessary to include several designs, the grossness of which neither the ingenuity of

the artist nor the coarse taste of his time can now reasonably be held to excuse." There you have the eighteenth century of which Hogarth was child and master.

In writing of him it would be agreeable to confine one's remarks entirely to his paintings, but that must not be. And why should it be? The more one peers into that busy, brutal, bewildering eighteenth century, the more interesting it becomes. Names start out. You dip here and there, and the names become clothed with personality. Mr. Dandridge, for example, who painted William Kent. Of them more anon. The first entry in Mr. Dobson's Bibliography contains a mention of Dandridge, under the date 1731, when Hogarth was thirty-four. I copy it. The extract opens a fuzzy window to the eighteenth century.

"Three Poetical Epistles. To Mr. Hogarth, Mr. Dandridge, and Mr. Lambert, Masters in the Art of Painting. Written by Mr. Mitchell. *Dabimus, capimusque vicissim*. London: Printed for John Watts, at the Printing Office in Wild-Court near Lincoln's Inn Fields. MDCCXXXI. Price sixpence. 4to.

"The epistle to Hogarth, whom the poet styles his friend, and 'Shakspeare in Painting,' occupies pp. 1-5, and is dated 'June 12th, 1730.' Passages are quoted at p. 32. The following, from that to the 'eminent Face

Painter,' Bartholomew Dandridge, p. 6, gives the names of Hogarth's artistic contemporaries :—

'Nor wou'd I, partial or audacious, strive
To show what artists most excel alive : . . .
How Thornhill, Jervas, Richardson and Kent,
Lambert and Hogarth, Zinks (Zincke) and Aikman
paint ;
What Semblance in the Vanderbanks I see,
And wherein Dall (Dahl) and Highmore disagree ;
How Wooten, Harvey, Tilliman and Wright,
To one great End, in diff'rent Roads delight,' &c."

The verse is sorry stuff, is it not? One might go on for pages quoting from this bovrilised Bibliography. Under the date 1753 is the announcement of Hogarth's unfortunate experiment in æsthetics—"The Analysis of Beauty. Written with a view of fixing the fluctuating ideas of Taste." It would be pleasant to contrast Lamb's eulogy from the famous essay in "The Reflector" with Mrs. Oliphant's sorrowful comments. Space permits a few words only. "I contend," says Lamb, "that there is in most of his subjects that sprinkling of the better nature, which, like holy-water, chases away and disperses the contagion of the bad." Says Mrs. Oliphant: "Before his pictures the vulgar laugh, and the serious spectator holds his peace, gazing, often with eyes awestricken, at the wonderful unimpassioned

PLATE IV.—JAMES QUIN

(In the National Gallery, London)

Quin, the actor, was Garrick's portly rival. Note the eloquent eye and the voluble mouth. This hearty, eighteenth-century mummer wears a full-bottomed grey wig, and is dressed in a brown coat richly frogged with gold. The portrait is inscribed "Mr. Quin."







tragedy. But never a tear comes at Hogarth's call. It is his sentence of everlasting expulsion from the highest heaven of art."

The serious spectator may hold his peace before Hogarth's pictures, and I am quite prepared to admit that never a tear comes at Hogarth's call, or, for the matter of that, at the call of any other artist, great or small. Plays or books may make us cry, but pictures never. Alfred Stevens remarked that. The serious spectator, if he has been well brought up, certainly holds his peace before Hogarth's pictures, that is his paintings, but if he be a connoisseur his peace passes into joy at the pure colour, the fresh technique, the impulse and the vision of this great painter, whose fate it was to be regarded for so long as a mere moralist, and to be refused "the highest heaven of art," where Raphael and Correggio—yes! and the eclectics of Bologna—reigned. But the world has grown older and taste has improved, has changed very much since the day of the "notorious Mr. Trusler," whose name appears, with two other eighteenth-century authors, on the title-page of another book on Hogarth that I possess.

I bought it years ago for a few pence at

a second-hand book shop. It is a "popular" edition, undated, written and compiled by John Trusler, John Nichols, and John Ireland, and is no doubt based upon "The Works of Mr. Hogarth Moralised (1768), with Dedication by John Trusler." It was Mrs. Hogarth herself who, after her husband's death, "engaged a Gentleman to explain each Print and moralise on it in such a Manner as to make them as well instructive as entertaining."

Many in their youth must have gained their knowledge of Hogarth from this curious, informing volume, or from one of the many other compilations based upon the 1768 edition. The title of my volume precisely describes it—"The Works of William Hogarth: One hundred and fifty plates with Explanations." On each left-hand page is the picture, filling the page; on each right-hand page is the description and explanation, usually filling the page. The blocks are worn, travesties of the original prints; the letterpress is no doubt just what Mrs. Hogarth desired when she "engaged a Gentleman to explain each Print and moralise upon it."

The book is a monument to Hogarth's fecundity as draughtsman, observer, and satirist, but it gives no hint of his capacity as painter.

Here is the dainty "Marriage à la Mode" pageant in a series of battered *cliches*; here is "The Shrimp Girl," a mere dull illustration of a type in the same *genre* as "The Milk Maid" and "The Pie Man." I knew them well as a youth under the moral guidance of the Rev. Dr. Trusler; knew them without love, without emotion. Then one day at the National Gallery I saw the paintings of the "Marriage," "The Shrimp Girl," and his "Sister," saw "Polly Peachum" and "Peg Woffington," and himself painting the Comic Muse, and lo! I discovered that Hogarth was a painter, here bold, there exquisite, according to the demands of the subject.

Something perilous was it for an imaginative boy to pore over the plates in the Trusler-Nichols-Ireland book, in the propriety of a well-ordered home. Had life ever been so odd, so ugly, so crowded, so forced? Did that terrible madhouse scene in "The Rake's Progress" ever really happen? Did God permit such a travesty of love and life as the "Gin Lane" episode, or such ghastly horrors as "The Four Stages of Cruelty"? But there were some engravings that the boy thought infinitely amusing. One was "Time Smoking a Picture," and an-

other was the delightful "False Perspective." The twelve plates of "Industry and Idleness" fascinated him (he was too young to understand the moral of "The Harlot's Progress"), but "A Woman Swearing her Child to a Rich Citizen" seemed so enigmatically stupid that he never looked at it again. "The Altar-piece of St. Clement Danes Church" puzzled him. He knew enough of art to be aware that Hogarth was a strong and powerful draughtsman. Why, then, had he made and published this silly, weak illustration of angels and harps? The boy addressed the question to his uncle, and that gentleman, having perused the accompanying text, answered, "It was a burlesque of William Kent's altar-piece."

Whereupon the boy put the obvious question: "Who was William Kent?"

Uncle was silent, because, like the Master of Balliol on a certain occasion, he had nothing to say.

IV

WHO WAS WILLIAM KENT?

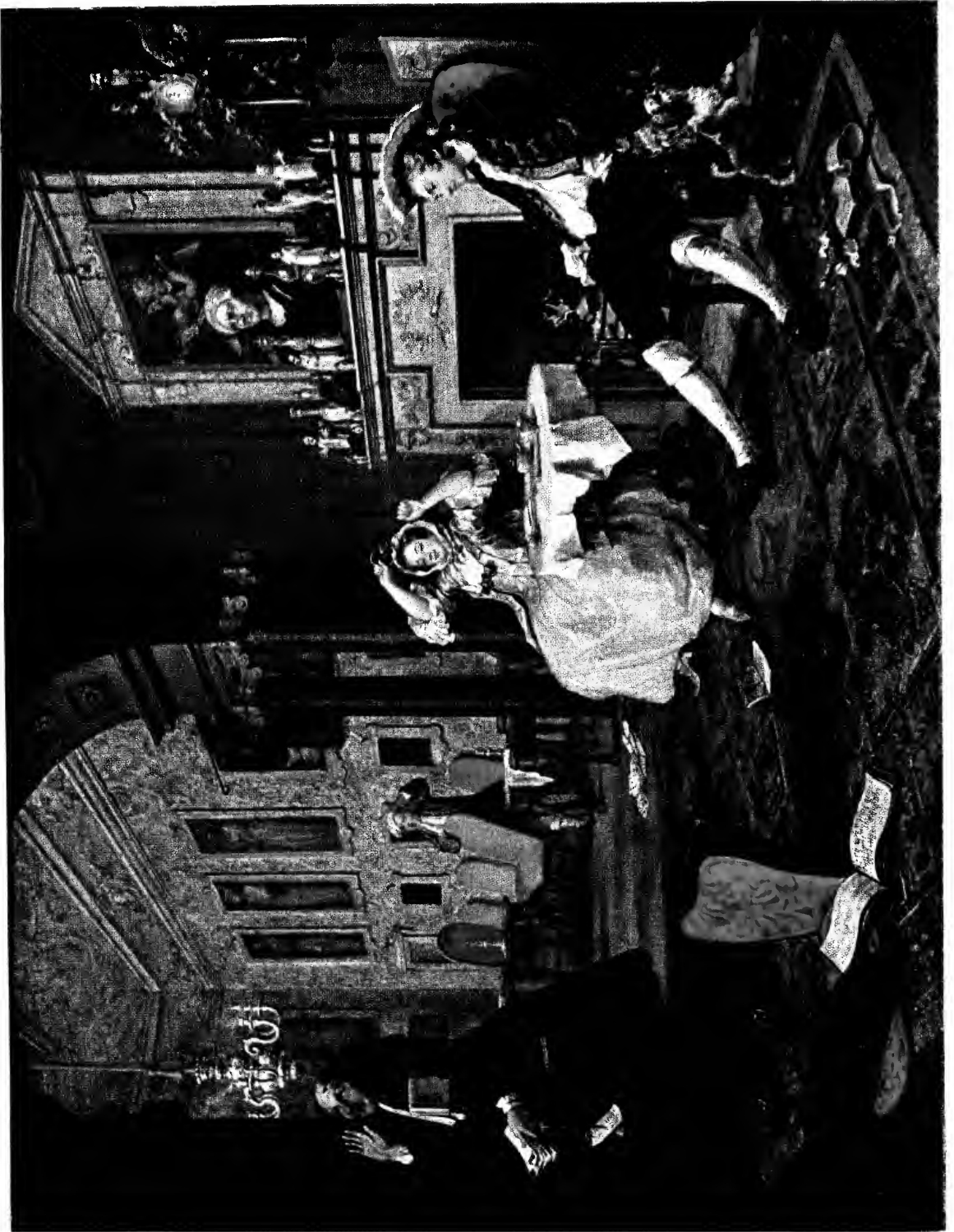
Who was William Kent? What is the record of the plump, self-satisfied dandy whose

PLATE V.—MARRIAGE À LA MODE

(In the National Gallery, London)

Scene II. of this matchless series, the finest pictorial satire of the century. It is called "Shortly after Marriage." We are in the peer's breakfast-room. The clock marks twenty minutes after twelve in the morning, the candles beneath the portraits of the four saints in the inner room are guttering, a dog sniffs at a lady's cap protruding from the husband's pocket, and the book peeping from the coat of the old steward is called "Regeneration." Hogarth never stayed his hand. The details are innumerable, amusing, italicised. What could be more exquisite than the characterisation of the lady, her pretty, dissolute, provocative face, and the abandon of the peer, too bored and tired, after his night's debauch, even to think of remorse. This "pictur'd moral" series, containing six scenes, was painted by Hogarth in 1745, and was purchased by Mr. Lane of Hillingdon in 1751 for £126.





likeness may be seen at the National Portrait Gallery?

Do you like this ruddy round-faced man with the eloquent eye, the double chin, and the thick lips? His clothes are certainly attractive—the red velvet turban and the fawn-coloured jacket open at the front showing the frilled shirt. Bartholomew Dandridge, that “eminent face painter,” painted this portrait.

Yes; this is a striking presentment of William Kent, 1684–1748, who had many friends and many enemies. Among the enemies was William Hogarth, who hated Kent.

When you visit the National Portrait Gallery, turn your gaze slightly to the left, and you will see the representation of Hogarth at his easel, painted by himself. What would Hogarth say if he could know that the portrait of his old enemy now hangs near his? Perhaps he would smile a welcome, for anger is subdued by Death the Reconciler.

I return to the question: “Who was William Kent?” The legend beneath his portrait says: “Painter, sculptor, architect, and landscape gardener.” He was all these and much more—decorator, designer of furniture, man milliner, arbiter of taste, and general

adviser on art and decoration to the fashionable world. Indeed, the name of William Kent flings wide the doors of the eighteenth century, which lives in all its crowded unattractiveness in Hogarth's unapproachable pictur'd morals.

Kent lives also in one of Hogarth's satirical prints, that called "The Man of Taste, Burlington Gate," which does not strike me as either very funny or very cruel. Our taste in satire has changed since Hogarth's time. This same Burlington Gate or colonnade, which once stood outside Burlington House in Piccadilly, may now, I believe, be found somewhere in the wilds of Battersea Park.

Let us try to draw a little nearer to Kent. The queer thing is that this man who dominated his world does not seem to have been great in any of his activities.

As a painter, Hogarth said of him: "Neither England nor Italy ever produced a more contemptible dauber." Horace Walpole remarked that his painted ceilings were as "void of merit as his portraits." Walpole also said that "Kent was not only consulted for furniture, frames of pictures, glass, tables, chairs, &c., but for plate, for a barge, and for a cradle, and so impetuous was fashion that two great ladies

prevailed on him to make designs for their birthday gowns."

Did the ladies like their birthday gowns? The petticoat of one was decorated with the columns of the five orders, the other was copper-coloured satin with ornaments of gold. I have never seen the altar-piece Kent painted for the Church of St. Clement Danes in the Strand, but I seldom pass St. Clement's without thinking of that "contemptible performance," as Hogarth called it.

It seems to have offended many others besides Hogarth, who satirised the altar-piece in the engraving that puzzled the boy mentioned in the preceding chapter. Walpole called it a parody, a burlesque on Kent's altar-piece. Hogarth maintained that it was neither; that it was but a "fair and honest representation of a contemptible performance." Terrible man, Hogarth, when he was on the war-path!

Where is that altar-piece now? Mr. Wheatly says in his "Hogarth's London" that it was "occasionally taken to the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand for exhibition at the music meetings of the churchwardens of the parish."

They had strange enjoyments in the worst-mannered period in our history.

Poor Kent! I try to plead for him. But it is difficult to be enthusiastic.

He was chosen to supply (delightful word that, supply!) the statue of Shakespeare for the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey. There it remains. It is no better than the marble effigies in the mason's gardens in the Euston Road.

Kent as an architect! There, surely, we have something sure and admirable. Holkam in Norfolk, Devonshire House in Piccadilly, and the Horse Guards are stated to be his work. That the Horse Guards from the park is a noble pile nobody can doubt, but is it all Kent's? His hand also may be traced inside Devonshire House. Mr. Francis Lenygon, Kent's modern champion, says that the two state apartments in Devonshire House are "certainly the finest in London, even if they can be surpassed in any palace in Europe."

Lord Burlington was Kent's champion during his lifetime. He met him when the "arbiter of taste" was thirty-two, and gave him apartments in his town house, now the Royal Academy, for the remainder of his life. Kent came through. Hogarth, try as he would, could not wreck him.

He died Master Carpenter to the King and

Keeper of Pictures, and he left a fortune. Kent came through. The man must have had extraordinary gifts of persuasion and power, hinted at by his biographers when they speak of his winning manners and gracious ways.

I see nothing of charm in his portrait by Dandridge; but Dandridge was no psychologist. He looks pompous; Hogarth looks pugnacious; so they remain in death as in life; but their rivalry is over. Everybody recognises Hogarth as the "father of English painting"; let us be kind to Kent, and cherish him as the "father of modern gardening." Walpole called him that. The ascription will offend nobody, not even Hogarth. To that magnificent Londoner gardens were nought except perhaps the garden of his villa at Chiswick.

V

HOGARTH AS PAINTER

The versatility of Hogarth's genius is a recurring surprise. His satires and moralities seem natural, the unforced expression of his vigorous, observant nature. Natural, too, seem the less inspired of his portraits, and the Con-

versation Pieces which employed the early years of his life; but the technical qualities of the best of his portraits and groups, and passages in the Progresses, are a recurring surprise. "The Harlot's Progress" was finished in his thirty-fourth year. The paintings of this series "were consumed in the fire which burnt down Mr. Beckford's house at Fonthill in 1755," although there seems to be some doubt if all six pictures were destroyed.

The Progresses were a development of the Conversation Pieces, of which "The Wanstead Assembly" was probably the first. This, which is now in the South London Art Gallery, proves to be "The Dance," one of the illustrations to the "Analysis of Beauty." I confess to finding the stiff and elegant breeding of these Conversation Pieces more attractive and certainly more amusing than many of his livelier scenes. Almost any of the Conversation Pieces could appositely illustrate a novel by Miss Ferrier. There was one at the Old Masters' Exhibition of 1910, "The Misses Cotton and their Niece," quite accurately described as "four ladies seated near a tea-table, with their backs to the fireplace; a fifth is standing, and a servant on the left is bringing a chair for her." Equally "nice,"

I am sure, were "The Rich Family," "The Wood Family," "The Cock Family," and "The Jones Family," and at the opposite pole to the bad Hogarth that was exhibited in the same room at Burlington House, supposed to be a memory of his five days' trip down the river to Sheppey. But it is unfair to judge Hogarth by "The Disembarkation": that was a *jeu d'esprit*, composed of "amusing incidents."

The Conversation Pieces having novelty, succeeded for a few years. We esteem them as the 'prentice work of a man of abounding energy and versatility, who was as conspicuous for his taste as for his lack of it. Hogarth seems to have had no particular prepossession towards beauty, but beauty occurs again and again in his paintings.

The face of the little wanton lady in the second scene of "Marriage à la Mode" is a delight; some of the heads of his servants are haunting. Leslie has drawn attention to the exquisite prettiness of Juno in "Strolling Actresses Dressing in a Barn," and Mr. Dion Calthorp has written a whole charming article on the handsome drummeress of "Southwark Fair." Every student of Hogarth must have been struck by his sudden statements of beauty

in ugly places, and of atrocities of bad taste anywhere. There is an episode in the "Night Scene, Charing Cross," that is disgusting, and I confess that the gobbling alderman in one of the "Industrious Apprentice" series gives me nausea. But he is never commonplace or feeble. This astonishing man will paint a head here with the finish of a Terburg, there with the gusto of a Raeburn.

I never seem to get used to his incursions into beauty. The surprise recurred in Paris at the exhibition of the "Cent Portraits de Femmes." I walked round the galleries playing the game of suggesting the names of the painters without referring to the catalogue. Among the portraits was one quite small, the head of a girl, fresh as a lark's song, an impromptu, a *premier coup*, colour simple, drawing gay. I ascribed it to Raeburn. It was Hogarth's "Miss Rich," owned by M. Max Michaelis. Then I paused and looked at the other Hogarths. Ah! there was that rendering, one of the most delightful of his portraits, of "Peg Woffington," lent by Sir Edward Tennant, not "dallying and dangerous" on a couch as in the version at the Garrick Club, but very charming, with a touch of primness that suits

PLATE VI.—SARAH MALCOLM

(In the National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh)

A portrait of the notorious Sarah Malcolm, charwoman and murderess, who was hanged near Mitre Court, Fleet Street, in 1733, for a triple murder. She was painted by Hogarth, in the condemned cell, two days before her execution. Mrs. Malcolm looks rather an attractive if a somewhat cunning matron, and her dress is certainly becoming. The painting, in tone and characterisation, is very pleasant, and we can forgive her the ostentatious display of the rosary.

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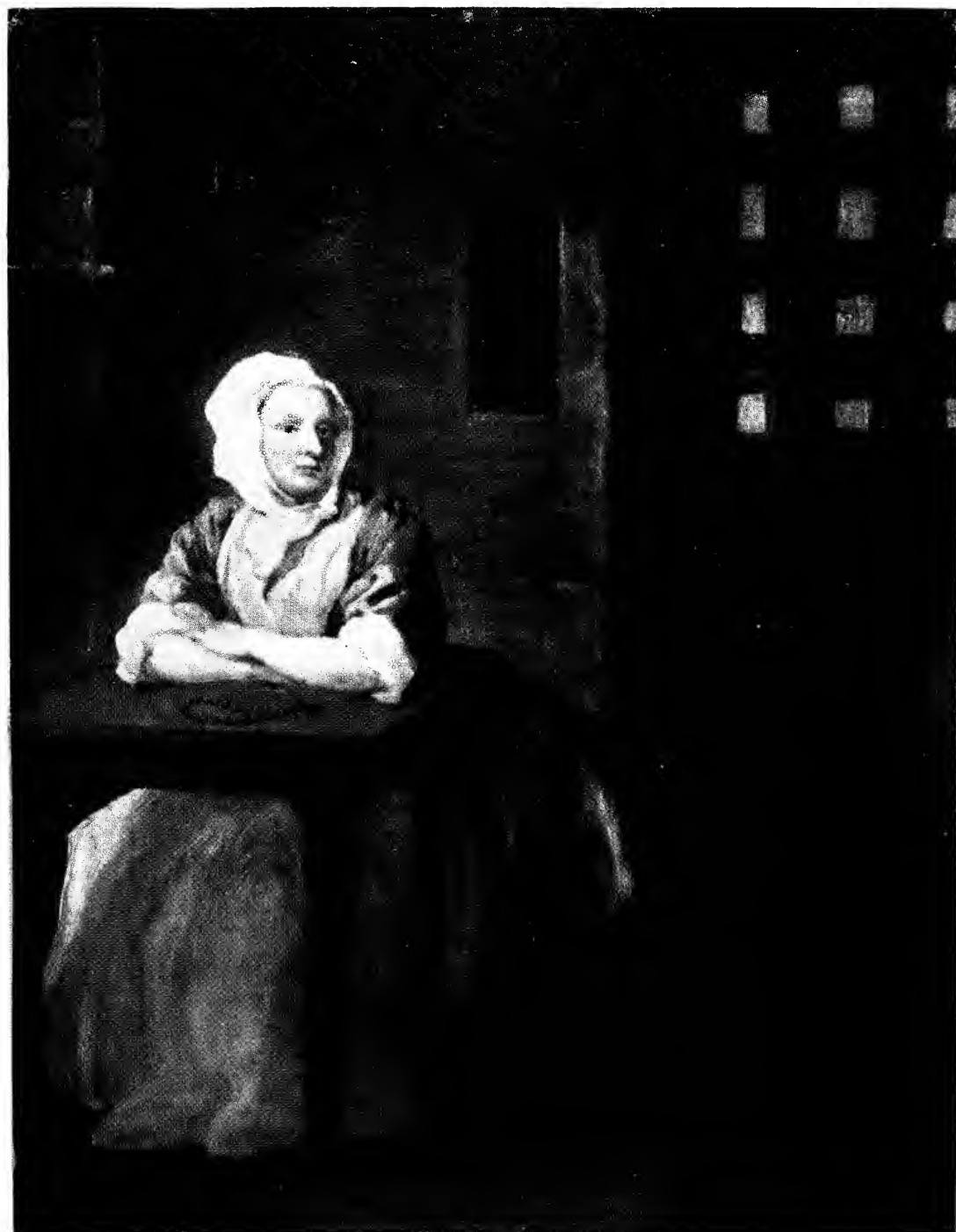
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her. Here is Hogarth as true artist, the vision clear, the treatment direct. Note the daintiness of the flower in her bosom, the delicious colour of the dress, and the importance of the accent of the knot of black ribbon against the gleaming pearls. Oh yes! Hogarth knew his business!

He painted Mrs. Woffington eight times. This one, pretty, plain Peg, with the rose in her corset, is my choice. The other two Hogarths at the "Cent Portraits de Femmes" exhibition were "Miss Arnold" from the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, a robust work, forceful and somewhat heavy, and lacking the naïveté and charm of "Peg Woffington," and the notorious "Sarah Malcolm," charwoman and murderess, who was hanged near Mitre Court, Fleet Street, on the 7th of March 1733, for a triple murder. Says Dr. Trusler: "The portrait of this murderess was painted by Hogarth, to whom she sat for her picture two days before execution." Mrs. Malcolm is rather an attractive if a somewhat cunning matron, and her dress is certainly becoming. The painting, in tone and quiet characterisation, is very pleasant, and we can forgive her the ostentatious display of the rosary.

If only it had been possible to send "The Shrimp Girl" to Paris. That brilliant impressionist sketch, done long before the era of impressionism, would have astonished the French critics who are not already acquainted with it. Indeed, "The Shrimp Girl" is something of a miracle. She cries out from Hogarth's works, a *tour de force*, done without premeditation, in some happy hour when the unerring hand unerringly followed the quick eye. It is an inspiration. One may say of it as Northcote said of Frans Hals: "He was able to shoot the bird flying—so to speak—with all its freshness about it, which even Titian does not seem to have done. . . ." "The Shrimp Girl" was sold at Mrs. Hogarth's sale in April 1790 for four pounds ten shillings, and was purchased for the National Gallery in 1884 for two hundred and sixty-two pounds ten shillings. After Mr. Sidney Colvin's eulogy in *The Portfolio*, one may go to almost any extreme in expressing admiration for "The Shrimp Girl" and other of Hogarth's paintings. Said Mr. Colvin: "Even Reynolds and Gainsborough, colourists often of an inexpressible loveliness, tenderness, and charm, were fumlbers in their method compared with Hogarth. . . . Without a school,

and without a precedent (for he is no imitator of the Dutchman), he has found a way of expressing what he sees with the clearest simplicity, richness, and directness."

Simple, rich, and direct is his portrait of "Garrick and his Wife" at Windsor Castle, a finished epic, quite unlike that lyrical sketch of "The Shrimp Girl." "Garrick and his Wife" was painted in 1757, when Hogarth was sixty. It is a flamboyant, decorative picture. Garrick, in blue and gold, is seen seated at a table in a moment of inspiration, pen in hand, cogitating the prologue to Foote's "Comedy of Taste." His wife, in a pink dress and white fichu, stands behind him, preparing to take the pen from his hand. She is alert and gay, he is invoking the muse; a charming picture, but if you look closely you will observe that Garrick's eyes are coarsely painted, "evidently by another hand." Thereby hangs a tale, a typical Hogarthian tale of wars in words, and in this case in deed too. Hogarth painted Garrick many times, receiving as much as two hundred pounds for his fine portrait of the "English Roscius" as Richard III.; but they quarrelled over the "Garrick and his Wife," and Hogarth in a fit of irritation drew his brush across the

face, disfiguring the eyes. The picture was never delivered, never paid for, and on Hogarth's death his widow generously gave it to Garrick. It passed into the possession of Mr. Locker of Greenwich Hospital, who sold it to George IV. In the memoirs of Mr. Locker's son is the following passage: "This picture is so lifelike that as little children we were afraid of it; so much so that my mother persuaded my father to sell it to George IV." That is a strange way for a picture to arrive in a royal collection. The King also owns the quaint, merry, crowded, landscape conversation-picture called "A View of the Mall, St. James's Park," but this evocation of the *beau monde* of the day promenading in cinnamon coats and peach-bloom breeches, and the ladies in every Chanticler colour and vagary, has been attributed by some authorities to Samuel Wale, R.A.

Mr. Fairfax Murray is the fortunate owner of "A Fishing Party," a small picture, nineteen by twenty-one and a half inches, which shows that Hogarth, besides his other gifts, was a master in romantic composition. On the border of a lake sit the fishing party—a charming lady, a nurse, and a child in the full light, and a reflective gentleman in the shade. The baby

holds the rod, the pretty mother guides it, and the float toys with the water. I protest that you rarely if ever see in these days so charming a portrait group composition as this designed by the Father of English Painting, who virtually had no forebears, and who turned from one branch of art to another with something of the ease of myriad-minded Leonardo. I suspect he studied the grace of Van Dyck's compositions.

Some of the early Victorian members of the New English Art Club would find it disadvantageous to pit themselves against the technical accomplishment of his tight, highly-finished "Lady's Last Stake." The subject is banal, and half-a-dozen Dutchmen could have painted this interior with more quality of surface and closer observance of light, but it is "done," and the paint has not faded and cracked as have so many works painted two hundred years later.

"The Lady's Last Stake" was a commission from Lord Charlemont. In 1757, in one of his periodical fits of vexation, Hogarth said he would "employ the rest of his time in portrait painting," but three years afterwards we find him, in weathercock mood, "determined to quit the pencil for the graver." Lord Charlemont begged

him, before he "bade a final adieu to the pencil," to paint him one picture. The result was this morality of the handsome, wicked officer, and the young and virtuous married lady. Mrs. Thrale was wont to allege that she sat for the fair gambler.

"The Stay Maker" should hang beside Watteau's "Gersaint's Sign," each a representation of a costumier's shop, each a masterpiece, but as it is impossible to bring together these two works by these two geniuses who were contemporaries, and who brought about the rebirth of art in France and England, I am quite content that "The Stay Maker" should remain where it is, helping to decorate an exquisite room in Mr. Edmund Davis's house. There is only one other picture on the wall—a Gainsborough portrait. "The Stay Maker" is a sketch, almost in monochrome, showing a man-milliner measuring a lady, while another mondaine kisses a baby fondly, but not on its chubby face. This little picture (thirty-five by twenty-seven inches) is full of life and gaiety, and is as delicate in its humour as "The Enraged Musician" at Oxford is forcible.

When I first saw the "George II. and his Family" at the Dublin National Gallery, I had

a thrill similar to that I experienced when I first saw "Miss Rich." It is an unfinished sketch, made when Hogarth was Sergeant Painter. Looking at it, again we wonder what heights this man might have reached had he received the encouragement that is given to eminent painters of our day. But, as it was, in spite of everything, Hogarth boxed the compass, and when he wrote "genius is nothing but labour and diligence," the "ingenious Mr. Hogarth," as Fielding called him, did not take into account that something else (which is genius) that was born in him, and that he struggled to express, and succeeded in expressing so triumphantly. And the end of all was "The Bathos," his last design, humorous, cynical, his finis, inscribed to his old enemies, "the dealers in dark pictures." Game to the end was William Hogarth!

VI

SOME PICTURES IN NATIONAL COLLECTIONS

If it interests you to study the variety of Hogarth's achievement in paint, his ladder-like progress, now up, now down, visit the Hogarth

Room at the National Gallery and turn from the prim and meticulous handling of "A Family Group" (No. 1153) to the dash and brilliancy of his "Sister" (No. 1663); from "Sigismonda Mourning over the Heart of Guiscardo," painted late in life, in one of his reactionary, "grand manner" moods, a commission that the patron, Sir Richard Grosvenor, refused to take; turn from academic, tear-sprinkled Sigismonda to the sparkle and impulse of "The Shrimp Girl." I have already expressed my admiration for this amazing sketch, and Sir Walter Armstrong, in his technical analysis of the painting of "Hogarth's Sister," has said all there is to say on the vivacious and original way in which Hogarth handled this sympathetic subject, and the skill with which he has, as it were, substituted light and colour for paint. Sir Walter notes that the system of colour is that followed by Eugene Delacroix a century later, who was under the impression that he was the innovator; that "the high lights and the deep shadows are in each case two primaries, which unite to form a half tone. The dress which produces the effect of yellow is yellow in the high lights, red in the deepest shadows, and orange in the transitions; so with the scarf,

PLATE VII.—SIMON FRASER, LORD LOVAT, 1666-1747

(In the National Portrait Gallery, London)

Here is the chief of the Fraser clan (patriot or traitor, which you like), a study in reds, browns, corpulency and craftiness, in the act of narrating some of his adventures, or perhaps detailing the various Highland clans on his fingers. Lord Lovat was executed for high treason. Hogarth journeyed to St. Albans to get "a fair view of his Lordship before he was locked up."

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the three tints of which are yellow, green, and blue."

In no other painting of Hogarth's that I have seen does he make this striking use of primaries and complementaries. He adopted a different technique for the robust and cheerful portrait of "Miss Lavinia Fenton" (who became Duchess of Bolton) as "Polly Peachum" in the "Beggar's Opera," and also for the lively representation of a scene from the opera which he saw at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1723. This vivacious development of the Conversation Piece genre hangs close to "Hogarth's Sister," and to the right is the group of his "Servants"—six heads rather less than life size, one of the most quietly beautiful renderings of character, seen with the eyes of affection, with which master has ever immortalised his dependents. After this, the "Calais Gate," or "The Roast Beef of Old England," a record of his collision with the Calais authorities, seems grotesque and gratuitously ugly in spite of its Hogarthian *brio* and beautiful colour. The carrion crow on the top of the gate is an example of his ingenuity in extricating himself from a difficulty. The picture, when finished, fell down, and a nail ran through the cross above the gate. Failing to conceal

the rent, Hogarth substituted for the cross a crow, and was quite pleased. In the engraving the cross appears in its rightful place. Carrion crow or cross! It was all one to this capable, confident, eighteenth-century Britisher, who would as lief paint a murderess in the condemned cell as a miss in yellow and laces, a Teniers-like "Distressed Poet" in a garret as a Velazquez-like "Scene from The Indian Emperor," a "Right Reverend Father in God" as the portrait of Quin the actor, Garrick's portly rival, in full-bottomed grey wig, lace ruffle, and brown coat richly frogged with gold. There can be no mistake as to the identity. The portrait is inscribed "Mr. Quin." Note the eloquent eye and the voluble mouth of this hearty eighteenth-century mummer.

I have kept the most popular of the Hogarth National Gallery pictures to the last—the famous "Marriage à la Mode" series. The detail of this "pictur'd moral" is a source of unending interest and pleasure to an endless procession of visitors. The eighteenth century may have found in the series a "horrible warning" of the consequences that follow profligacy in high life, but I am perfectly sure that no one in the

twentieth century deduces any moral from this melodrama in paint. It is more than that, it is a minute and craftsmanlike record of the rooms and decorative adjuncts of a wealthy and fashionable man's house in Hogarth's day, with his manner of living pushed almost to caricature, which was Hogarth's method of satire and fierce moral rebuke.

The engravings tell the fatal, foolish story; but to connoisseurs the quality and clarity of the paint is the thing. What could be more exquisite than the characterisation of the lady in Scene II., "Shortly after Marriage," her pretty, dissolute, provocative face, the abandon of her figure, and the haplessness of the peer, too bored and tired after his night's debauch even to think of remorse. The clock marks twenty minutes after twelve in the morning, the candles beneath the portraits of the four saints on the wall of the inner room are guttering, a dog sniffs at a lady's cap peeping from the husband's pocket, and the book protruding from the coat of the old steward is titled "Regeneration." Hogarth never stayed his hand. The details are innumerable, amusing, italicised. I look and smile quietly, returning always to the characterisation of those two figures, the husband

and wife, so delicately observed, so exquisitely painted.

In the middle of the wall at the National Gallery, facing the "Marriage à la Mode" series, painted in the same year when he was forty-eight, is Hogarth's own portrait with his dog Trump. Blue-eyed, watchful, sturdy, wearing a fur cap, with a scar over his left eye, he has, indeed, "a sort of knowing, jockey look." He was not a modest man. Why should he have been? In this portrait he allows himself great company. The oval rests on three volumes labelled "Shakespeare," "Milton," and "Swift," and in the lower left corner, drawn on a palette in the corner, is a serpentine curve with these lines under it, "The Line of Beauty," the flaunting inscription which gave rise to his book, "The Analysis of Beauty." "No Egyptian hieroglyphic ever amused more than it [the serpentine curve] did for a time," he tells us. The requests for a solution of the enigma were so numerous that he wrote "The Analysis of Beauty" to explain the symbol. The book, although shrewd in parts, was a dire failure. "The world of professional scoffers and virtuosi fell joyously upon its obscurities and incoherencies." The obscurities may be divined

from the text of the book, which contains "the not very definite axiom," as Mr. Dobson calls it, attributed to Michael Angelo—"that a figure should be always Pyramidal, Serpentine, and multiplied by one, two, and three."

I pause to take breath, and refresh myself with an epigram that Hogarth wrote *apropos* this ill-starred "solution of the enigma."

"What!—a book, and by Hogarth! then twenty to ten,
All he gain'd by the *pencil*, he'll *lose* by the pen."

"Perhaps it may be so—howe'er, miss or hit,
He will publish—*here goes—it's double or quit.*"

It was an old plate of his Portrait with dog Trump, on which the "Line of Beauty" appears, that he converted into "The Bruiser Charles Churchill" design, his answer to Churchill's "most virulent and vindictive satire," called "An Epistle to William Hogarth."

There are three works by him at the National Portrait Gallery—the early, unimportant "Committee of the House of Commons examining Bambridge"; the strong self-portrait, "Hogarth Painting the Comic Muse"; and that specimen of relentless and amusing characterisation, "Simon, Lord Lovat, painted by Hogarth before his Execution for High Treason." Hogarth journeyed to St. Albans to get "a

fair view of his Lordship before he was locked up." Here is the chief of the Fraser clan to the life (patriot or traitor, which you like!), a study in reds, browns, corpulency, and craftiness, in the act of narrating some of his adventures, or perhaps detailing the various Highland clans on his fingers. This masterful, pawky Jacobite was tried before his peers in 1747, found guilty, and beheaded on Tower Hill. We know more of him from Hogarth's picture than from a whole book of documents and descriptions.

And of all self-portraits is there one more self-revealing than "Hogarth Painting the Comic Muse"? He was then sixty-one. With his short-cropped grey hair he looks like a pugilist, and a pugilist he might have been had not Nature, so casual, so inexplicable in her gifts, chosen to plant the seeds of real artistic genius in the soul of belligerent, brave, preposterously British William Hogarth.

VII

THE SOANE MUSEUM AND FOUNDLING HOSPITAL

The "Picture Room" of the Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields, that hushed, dim, small

apartment, lighted by a lantern light, approached by a glazed door from the crowded corridor of this dignified house, crowded to excess with works of art collected by Sir John Soane (1753-1837), is virtually a Hogarth Room. You enter, and facing you, hung frame to frame, are the eight paintings illustrating "The Rake's Progress," purchased by Sir John Soane in 1802 for five hundred and seventy guineas. You turn to the left and your eyes alight upon Nos. 1 and 2 of the "Four Prints of an Election," called "The Entertainment," and "The Canvassing for Votes"; you turn to the right and there are the second pair, "The Polling," and "The Chairing of the Member."

Reams have been written about these pictures. I will be reticent—space compels it—and content myself with quoting one word, the word "matchless," used by Charles Lamb to describe the first of the Election series. There are passages of beauty in all the scenes, as in "The Rake's Progress," but I find so large a meal as twelve "pictur'd morals," hustling each other, a little difficult to digest. The Hogarth surfeit, a well-known ailment, always assails me in this lantern-lighted room of the Soane Museum. Perhaps it is the obsession of

the "movable planes." Opening at a touch, the walls slide away and disclose more, more, and more works of art. But I do not suffer from Hogarth surfeit at the Foundling Hospital, over which his fatherly spirit ever seems to brood.

The eighteenth century and the twentieth meet at the Foundling Hospital; the art of Hogarth, the art of his contemporaries, of young Mr. Joshua Reynolds, and the artless lives of the foundlings who patter the note of a past day in revived Bloomsbury.

You will seek in vain for modernity at the Foundling Hospital. A reproduction of a popular picture of our day called "For Ever and Ever, Amen," was the only example of a modern work of art in the playroom of the little girl foundlings at the Foundling Hospital where I found myself one Sunday.

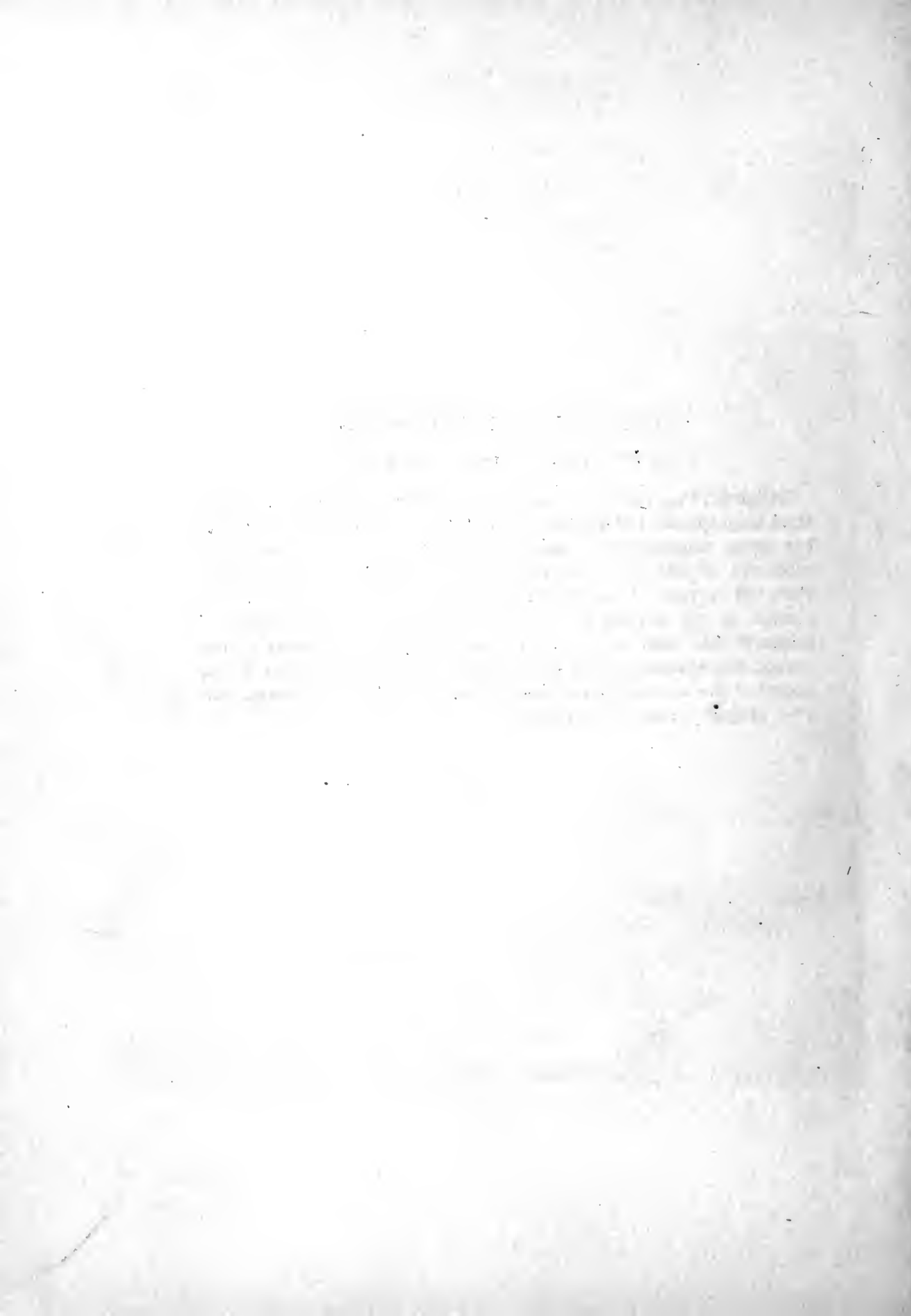
Of course the little girls understood the picture. Their dawning minds can grasp a simple representation of the human gamut of love, loyalty, and grief from childhood to age. Not for them is Hogarth's forcible, chaotic, amazingly clever "March to Finchley," that hangs in one of the rooms.

But the little girls understand Hogarth's bold and picturesque "Captain Coram" dis-

PLATE VIII.—PEG WOFFINGTON

(In Sir Edward Tennant's Collection)

Delightful Peg, actress, daughter of a Dublin bricklayer, known in staid biographies as Margaret Woffington. "Her beauty and grace, her pretty singing and vivacious coquetry, and the exquisite art, especially of her male characters, carried all hearts by storm." Here she is, not "dallying and dangerous" on a couch as in the version at the Garrick Club, but very charming, with a touch of primness that suits her. Note the daintiness of the flower in her bosom, the delicious colour of the dress, and the importance of the accent of the knot of black ribbon against the gleaming pearls. Oh yes! Hogarth knew his business.





played in the place of honour, even though the gallant and charitable seaman may frighten them on darkening evenings by his very likeness, Hogarth's great gift.

Captain Coram is very much alive, "all there." Another moment and he will start from his chair. But this founder of the hospital will not shout at the children. This big man had a big, kind heart. His life was a long whisper of love to the fatherless.

It was here, at the Foundling Hospital, that Hogarth was instrumental in forming the first public collection of pictures in this country. Long before the National Gallery was thought of, before the Royal Academy was born, this Foundling Hospital collection was one of the sights of London. It was the fashionable lounge in the reign of George II.; here was held the first exhibition of contemporary portraits. And Hogarth, a governor and guardian of the Foundling Hospital, originated it.

He started the collection by presenting this portrait of Captain Coram in 1740, and he wrote, some years later, that it is "the best portrait in the place, notwithstanding the first painters in the kingdom exerted all their talents to vie with it." But "the first painters"

were not a very mighty lot; they were Allan Ramsay, Cotes, Hudson, Shackleton, Wilson, Highmore, and a young man called Reynolds, who twenty years after Hogarth had given his "Captain Coram" presented his "Lord Dartmouth." It is a pretty piece of delicate work, but Reynolds was not then in his prime, and I have a shrewd suspicion that when, in 1787, he produced his magnificent "Lord Heathfield," great Sir Joshua had cast many a glance at Hogarth's "Captain Coram," painted forty-seven years before.

This is a problem for the elder foundlings. The mites are content with "For Ever and Ever, Amen."

I watched them, after the long service in the chapel, silently and somewhat timorously enjoying their cold mutton and hot potatoes. Sullen rows and rows of them, all stamped by that sad something that characterises the homeless waif, something of degradation and the menace of the fight to come all uphill.

But as I mused sadly on this spectacle my eyes caught sight of a tablet on the wall, a list of many names of foundlings who had died for their country in the Boer War.

Well, the tears do start still sometimes.

Think of that leap!—Here a foundling by chance, later a hero by choice, one of that great brotherhood, equal in death, equally adored, of the privileged and the brave. "*Dulce et decorum est*——"

I am sure that Hogarth, of whom Dr Trusler wrote, "Extreme partiality for his native country was the leading trait of his character," would approve that tablet, and so would Captain Coram.

VIII

THE "VILLAKIN" AT CHISWICK, AND THE END

The "villakin" at Chiswick where, from 1749, Hogarth spent the summers, is not very accessible. The most romantic, if the slummiest route, is to walk from Hammersmith Bridge through riverside alleys and by sedate Thames terraces to Chiswick Mall. Then turn up through the village, virtually unspoilt, a lane of old London still treated with respect. At the beginning of the village the churchyard flanks the street, and if you look through the gates you will see Hogarth's conspicuous, important, and ugly tomb. If you obtain admittance to the churchyard you will find carved

upon the tomb a mask, a laurel wreath, maulstick, palette, pencils, the title of his unfortunate book, "The Analysis of Beauty," and his epitaph, written by Garrick:—

"Farewell, great painter of Mankind!
Who reach'd the noblest point of Art,
Whose *pictur'd Morals* charm the Mind,
And through the Eye correct the Heart.
If Genius fire thee, Reader, stay:
If *Nature* touch thee, drop a Tear;
If neither move thee, turn away,
For Hogarth's honour'd dust lies here."

I do not think you will drop a tear. I do not think Hogarth's "pictur'd morals" will ever correct your heart; but you may in passing meditate upon the differences in epitaphs throughout the world—this on Hogarth's tomb, for example, and that in a German churchyard copied by a chance pilgrim:—

"I will awake, O Christ, when Thou callest me, but let me sleep a little, for I am very tired."

Tearless, heart uncorrected, yet you will uncover before the "honour'd dust" of the Father of English Painting, forthright and forcible, who endured to the end, and whose name is imperishable. Then you pass on up Hogarth Lane to the "villakin," no longer in fields open

to the country and the river, but amidst a multitude of little dwellings and little streets, noisy with children and the rumble of infrequent traffic. The narrow, Georgian, red-brick house, the "villakin," stands in a garden surrounded by a high wall. There, in the quiet, empty, memory-haunted house, the spirit of Hogarth may be truly evoked.

This place where the dead live is preserved, tended, and open to the public through the generosity of Colonel Shipway, who, in 1902, "presented it to the nation and to the Art World in memory of the Genius that once lived and worked within its walls." Happy work, for in Hogarth's time Chiswick was fresh and green, and the panelled rooms of his summer lodging were reposeful, and there was, and is, a hanging, projecting bay window on the first floor overlooking the garden, where he would sit and talk with his friends, with Garrick, and Fielding, and Townley, and plan and scheme diatribes in print and pencil, and invent pictorial chronicles. The green space is smaller than it was, and the studio has been pulled down, but the garden is well tended and secluded. Four of the large trees, including the hawthorn where the nightingales

sang, are gone, but the ancient mulberry still remains, with the fruit of which Hogarth was wont to regale the children of rural Chiswick. Gone is the tomb of Pompey the dog; and the stone with the carving recording the death of Dick the bullfinch, inscribed with his own hand, "Alas! poor Dick! 1760. Aged 11," has also disappeared.

The living rooms, one on the ground floor and three on the first floor, are now hung with engravings of his works—fine proofs, ranging from his first important essays, the unamusing "Burlington Gate" and the masterly "Hudibras" series, published before he was thirty, to the valedictory "Bathos." To those who know Hogarth only through the piracies of his engravings and the worn impressions that have been scattered through the land, these brilliant proofs are a revelation. Rich, velvety, direct and accomplished in technique, the subjects have little of the amenities that moderns have been trained to expect in art-productions of a popular kind. Hogarth knew his own mind and his public. His moralities, he said, "were addrest to hard hearts. I have preferred leaving them *hard*, and giving the effect, by a quick touch, to rendering them languid and

feeble by fine strokes and soft engraving, which require more care and practice than can often be attained, except by a man of a very quiet turn of mind."

He was not a man of a "quiet turn of mind." He was a fighter, and an artist who never spared himself, and who went straight to his goal without circumlocution. With a few strokes he could give lasciviousness to a lip, desire to an eye, scorn and contempt often, nobility rarely. His *Industrious Apprentice* is merely bland, merely smug. But as a technician he was superb within his limits. The plates bearing the words, "Inscribed, Printed, Engraved and Published by William Hogarth," are magnificent. In them Hogarth the artist and Hogarth the fighter and scorner mingle. I turn from the sentiment of "The Distressed Poet," from the force of "The Enraged Musician," from the daintiness of the second scene of "Marriage à la Mode," to the contempt and scorn of "Portrait of John Wilkes," and to his amazing misunderstanding of Rembrandt expressed in his burlesque of his own "Paul Before Felix," with this legend: "Design'd and etch'd in the ridiculous manner of Rembrant [the spelling is his own], by William Hogarth."

But what a man he was! sure of himself, certain of his power. His original sketches, many of which are at the British Museum, antedate Rowlandson, whose manner may have been founded on Hogarth.

Enduring to the end, Hogarth busied himself towards the close of his life retouching and repairing his plates, one of which, "The Bench," he was working upon at Chiswick the day before his death. It is said that he had premonition of a coming breakdown. "Very weak, but remarkably cheerful," he was conveyed on October 25, 1764, from Chiswick to his town house in Leicester Fields, and if *in extremis* we do see, as in a timeless vision, the run of our past lives, Hogarth in that jolting journey through eighteenth-century London, an ill man of sixty-seven, may have recalled the salient scenes of his rushing life.

There was the memory of his father, schoolmaster and corrector for the press in Ship Court, Old Bailey, whose little son, great William, was born in Bartholomew Close and baptized at the church of Bartholomew the Great. There was his apprenticeship to the silver-plate engraver Ellis Gamble; the development of his technical memory for the forms of

things; his growing power of swift drawing; his first prints; his lawsuit against Morris, which was practically to prove to the world that he was a painter as well as an engraver; his runaway marriage with the daughter of Sir James Thornhill; the success of the Progresses; his fight with the pirates; his scorn of conventional connoisseurship; the visit of this hardened Britisher to France, where "he pooh-poohed the houses, the furniture, the ornaments, and in the streets was often clamorously rude"; his serio-comic arrest at Calais; his progress in art and reputation; the house in Leicester Fields; his appointment as Sergeant Painter; his quarrel with Wilkes and Churchill—all the vicissitudes of that full, fighting, hard-working, outstanding life; and now—is this the last journey?

"What will be the subject of your next print?" a friend asked Hogarth.

"The End of All Things!" was his reply.

That "Bathos" plate was prophetic.

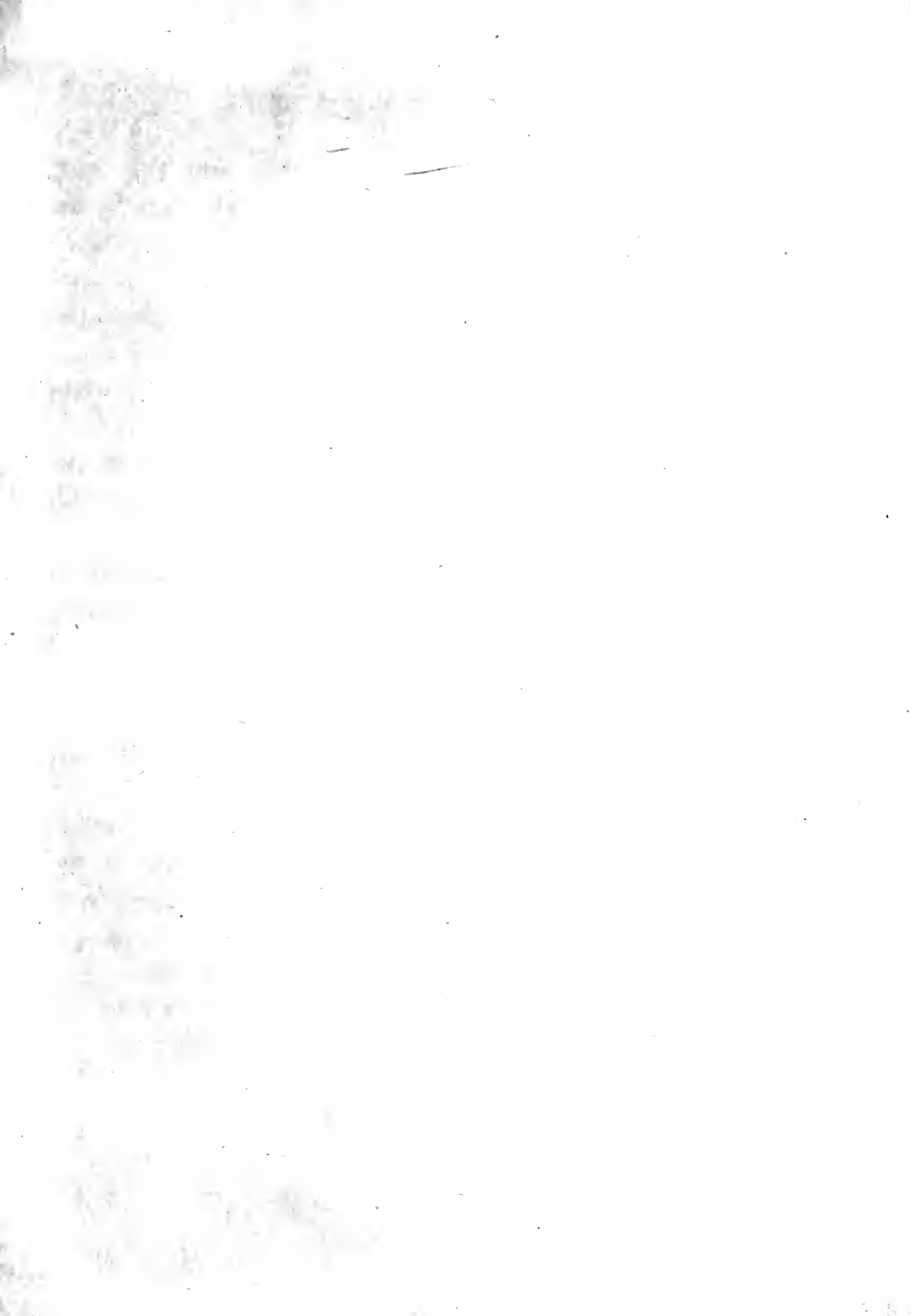
Well, the journey is over. He has arrived in Leicester Fields. That night, going to bed, "he was seized with a vomiting, upon which he rang his bell with such violence that he broke it [that was so like Hogarth], and expired about two hours afterwards."

His house, the last but two on the east side of Leicester Square, became later the smaller half of the Sablonière, or Jaquier's Hotel. It is now Archbishop Tenison's school. From the windows you look down upon the white bust by Joseph Durham, lean and watchful, that stands in a corner of modern, spruce Leicester Square.

I should like to see carved upon the bust the characteristic concluding passage of Hogarth's disjointed autobiography:—

“This I can safely attest, I have invariably endeavoured to make those about me tolerably happy, and my greatest enemy cannot say I ever did an intentional injury: though, without ostentation, I could produce many instances of men that have been essentially benefited by me. What may follow, God knows.”

We know what has followed in this world—acknowledgment, admiration, the title of the Father of British Painting, and the example of a man who endured to the end, which is the most difficult of all the enterprises of life. For the end approaches to most of us when we are weakest. Hogarth broke the bell-rope.







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